

Message Text

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FM USDEL SALT TWO II

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1856

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

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S E C R E T USDEL SALT TWO II 0087

EXDIS SALT

DOD HANDLE AS SPECAT FOR SECDEF

E. O.11652 XGDSI

TAGS: PARM

SUBJ: SALT PLENARY, MARCH 13, 1973

1. FIRST PLENARY HELD MORNING OF MARCH 13. SEMENOV, IN A STATEMENT THAT WAS RATHER PEDESTRIAN AND PERFUNCTORY, NOTED POSITIVE CHANGES IN US- SOVIET RELATIONS RESULTING FROM MAY, 1972 SUMMIT MEETING AND FROM SUBSEQUENT EFFORTS OF SIDES TOWARD PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENTS REACHED. SUCCESS IN NEW PHASE OF SALT WOULD MAKE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF US- SOVIET RELATIONS. HE USED QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT NIXON AND BREZHNEV TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS. APPROACH OF SOVIET SIDE TO NEW PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WAS FORMULATED IN DECEMBER 21, 1972 SPEECH OF BREZHNEV: "... UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED IN MOSCOW SHOULD BE CONSOLIDATED AND DEVELOPED. ONE OF AIMS OF CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS IS TO FIND WAYS TO TURN INTERIM AGREEMENT INTO A PERMANENT ONE. AND IT WOULD PROBABLY BE A GOOD THING TO GIVE THOUGHT TO HOW TO PASS FROM LIMITING ARMAMENTS TO THEIR GRADUAL REDUCTION, AND ALSO TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOME KIND OF LIMITS TO THEIR QUALITATIVE DEVELOPMENT." SEMENOV NOTED THIS SPEECH MET WITH RESPONSE IN STATEMENTS OF US

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OFFICIALS.

2. SEMENOV CALLED EXISTING AGREEMENTS A " GOOD DEPARTURE POINT" AND SAID INTERIM AGREEMENT PROVIDES " SOUND BASIS" FOR PREPARATION OF MORE COMPLETE AGREEMENT. (THIS REPRESENTS SOME CONTRAST WITH HIS OPENING STATEMENT AT LAST SESSION, WHEN HE SAID " A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT ON THE LIMITATION OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS EVIDENTLY MUST INCLUDE THE PROVISIONS OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT IN THE FORM IN WHICH THEY HAVE ALREADY BEEN AGREED BY THE SIDES.") SEMENOV CLOSED BY CALLING FOR CALM AND THOUGHTFUL APPROACH AND SAID ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS ONLY ACHIEVABLE ON BASIS OF EQUAL SECURITY AND NO UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE.

3. JOHNSON REVIEWED WORK OF SALT TWO- I AND DISCUSSED OVERALL US APPROACH TO SALT TWO. OVERALL GOAL IS WORKING OUT OF PERMANENT AGREEMENT LIMITING STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS TO REPLACE INTERIM AGREEMENT WHICH WILL PARALLEL ABM TREATY. ALTHOUGH PROBLEMS COMPLEX AND APPROACHES OF TWO SIDES NOT IDENTICAL, AGREEMENT WOULD REDUCE PERCEPTIONS BY EITHER SIDE OF NECESSITY, OTHER THAN FOR MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT, FOR MAJOR NEW ARMS PROGRAMS.

4. JOHNSON STATED US CONTINUES TO BELIEVE AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE ESSENTIAL EQUIVALENCE ANY SALT AGREEMENT MUST EMBODY IS EQUAL AGGREGATE LIMIT ON NUMBER OF ICBM AND SLBM LAUNCHERS AND HEAVY BOMBERS, WITH APPROPRIATE PROVISIONS FOR SUBSTITUTION. US ALSO BELIEVES THERE SHOULD BE EQUAL SUB- CEILING ON NUMBER OF ICBM LAUNCHERS AND EQUAL OVERALL CEILING ON ICBM FORCE THROW WEIGHT. ABM TREATY COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED UNTIL PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY WAS MET AND ESSENTIAL EQUIVALENCE MUST BE ACHIEVED IN AN AGREEMENT IN OFFENSIVE AREA AS WELL. US DELEGATION SEES NO INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLE AS SIDES MOVE TOWARD SUCH AN AGREEMENT. MINI- PLENARY SCHEDULED MARCH 16. JOHNSON

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